

# The Sun.

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## A PRAYER FOR LIGHT.

Lord God of peace and war,  
Thy presence we implore!  
Descend from heights afar  
And lead us as of yore!

The nations stagger, blind  
And perishing in night;  
O let us once more find  
The long delaying light!

Deal gently with our sin,  
Deal gently with our grief,  
Thou who has shut us in  
This plane of unbelief.

Thou who hast spread a veil  
Before our mortal eyes,  
So that earth's noblest fail  
Thy way to recognize!

Thy pity we invoke  
Upon our darkness here;  
O lift the battle smoke  
And let Thy light appear!

M. E. BUEHLER.

## A Good Veto.

Governor WHITMAN has blocked by his veto the fifth consecutive attempt of the trolley interests to take possession of the Albany post road in the Westchester town of Ossining, Mount Pleasant and Greenburg. For many years the Burns law has protected this historic highway against invasion. There have been repeated efforts to repeal the Burns law and thus permit the laying of tracks in this narrowest part of the post road, to the practical destruction of that great usefulness as a thoroughfare which it now possesses.

Year after year THE SUN has called attention to the sinister projects of the road grabbers, and year after year the scheme of destruction has been defeated either in the Legislature or by the Executive.

We congratulate Governor WHITMAN on the accurate perception of public duty which inspired his veto of the pernicious Slater bill and upon his spirited performance of that duty. He might have allowed the bill to die by merely withholding his signature a little while longer, for after midnight-to-morrow measures still unapproved by the Executive perish without his action. But the Governor chose to dispose of the matter openly by veto, and he should have full credit for a public service thus manfully rendered.

## Kitchener and French.

Whatever changes may occur in the British Cabinet Sir JOHN FRENCH is not likely to be superseded as commander of the troops in France by Lord KITCHENER. Each is in the right place. KITCHENER is organizing armies for victory with characteristic energy, and FRENCH supplies the tactical skill in the field in perfect coordination with that great Frenchman JOSEPH JOFFRE.

There should be no controversy about the comparative merits of FRENCH and KITCHENER as soldiers because the British General at the front has done his difficult work admirably. If a vote could be taken in the army it would be practically unanimous against a change of commanders. If General JOFFRE and his able lieutenants PAU and MAUROY were consulted they would doubtless declare their strong faith in Sir JOHN FRENCH and express their profound esteem for him as an associate.

As General in command, diplomat and comrade Sir JOHN FRENCH has proved the wisdom of his selection. The South African war was not a great conflict, but it is no reflection upon KITCHENER, whose system of blockhouses and drives ended it, to say that the most brilliant successes in the field were largely due to the genius of Sir JOHN FRENCH as a cavalry commander. He made no mistakes, and often with a small force he beat the Boers at their own game. His dashes upon Kimberley and Koe-dersand, his victory at Elandsburg and his strategy at the railway centre of Colburg, all showing sound initiative and rapidity of execution, won him a place beside STONEWALL JACKSON, a soldier whom FRENCH humbly admired. It will be remembered that the cavalry saved the British army in the splendid retreat on Mons. "I never had to retreat," Von Moltke once said, "that is the true test of generalship."

Since Mons FRENCH has often taken the offensive with telling effect, not only in the great drive that forced the Germans to retreat from Meaux but at La Bassée, Neuve Chapelle and Ypres. In short, it is the FRENCH of the Boer war who is commanding the British army on the far larger stage in Flanders, and the German General Staff neither outwits nor outthinks him. It would be risking disaster if the Government at home were to take the command out of the hands of Sir JOHN FRENCH and make him subordinate to Lord KITCHENER, who has had no time to study the intricate strategy of the campaign and does not know the terrain half as well as the other man. Which is doing the more valuable work in the war may be a question, but we have no doubt that KITCHENER of Khartoum is great enough to insist that Sir JOHN FRENCH shall not be disturbed in the supreme command in France.

## The Lovely East Adriatic Coast.

The entrance of the southern European States into the war promises to make an active scene of operations of the east Adriatic coast that has so far been scarcely more than the background of the great strife. This western fringe of the Balkan peninsula with its harbors and strong strategic vantage points has long been a contention between Austrian and Italian diplomats and the goal toward which Serb ambition has struggled for a window on the sea.

The Austrian fleet operating from Pola has been zealously guarding this treasure of the Dual Monarchy, making now and then a dash into Antivari and then bombarding the neighboring black mountains while the British and French in their effort to succeed their diminutive Montenegrin ally have tried to force their way through the Bocche di Cattaro. But the romantic beauties of clusters of islands, the medieval charms of the towns and the fascinating remains of the splendors of Rome's declining days and of the freshness and vigor of the Venetian Republic have been undisturbed.

Perhaps nowhere else can these two interesting periods be studied to such an advantage; and as the coast has been somewhat on the byway of travel and the world has just begun to know it, may it remain undisturbed, its treasures undisturbed by war's ravages.

There are few more beautiful bodies of waters than the Bocche di Cattaro or quainter towns than those the Venetians built or embellished with their art at the foot of the rugged confining mountain slopes. It was at Spalato that Diocletian built his great rambling palace and where was the original tomb of the Emperor. At Zara is the church of San Donato, its flooring the pavement of the old Roman forum. At Durazzo a great straggling wall that it took years to build climbs the hills to a crowning Venetian citadel, and marking out an area ten times greater than the present town are the remains of its ancient Roman wall. Ragusa, built solidly to last forever and remaining much as the Venetians left it, was once the stronghold of the Adriatic, but now its massive walls challenge the marksmen of the modern battleship. And what a target would be the old Roman amphitheatre on the hill slope of Pola just above the topmasts of the Austrian ships!

Whatever the result of the war, the status of the coast will be materially affected. A Teutonic victory would mean the shutting off of Serbia from her coveted Adriatic outlet, the strengthening of Austria's hold on Dalmatia and Bosnia and the fortifying of her position as an arbiter of the future of unfortunate Albania. Rome reported some time ago as one of the preliminaries of Italy's entrance into the war an understanding with Serbia as to the division of this coast. How far the ambitions of both of these nations extend as regards Dalmatia is not known; but it is beyond a question that Serbia will demand Ragusa, which in spite of the many years since a Serb monarch ruled there is still to her the "South Slavic Athens," and a strip further south to her sister Serb State of Montenegro out of her black mountains. And Italy must find herself dominant in Albania, secure, if not in possession, at least in the actual control of the important harbors of Durazzo and Avlona.

But whatever the exactions of war, may fate deal kindly with this interesting, beautiful coast, its long troubled people and its treasures.

## Operatic Education.

The participation of Italy in the European war may affect this country in numerous ways, and New York city in one of which possibly little thought has been taken. We may have to face some unwelcome changes in the plans of the Metropolitan Opera House directors. This would be unfortunate, since so much effort and ingenuity were used to give us an excellent season of opera in the past winter. But if anything should chance to make the performance of operas in Italian too difficult, we may comfort ourselves with the thought that most of the German singers are to remain here all summer, and that German opera can still give us artistic pleasure.

Perhaps a contraction of the lines on which our seasons are customarily planned may provide a field for a demonstration of the educational value of previous operatic activities. We have heard a great deal about the educational influence of opera, but no one of the preachers of this doctrine has yet told us what this educational influence accomplishes. Up to the present time it has not even educated us to like opera, and yet that is all that disinterested observers have believed it ever could accomplish.

If the people of this country, who

have been coaxed, cajoled and even scolded to make them go to hear operas, have refused to support the lyric drama in Boston, Philadelphia and Chicago, and have with brilliant enthusiasm turned their backs on it in New York when it was offered to them at low prices and in their own language, it must be admitted that the various educational campaigns have been lamentable failures. The revelations about the affairs of the defunct Century Opera Company, which was created for the purpose of supplying a supposedly enormous demand on the part of persons of moderate means, prove that there was no such demand at all.

The truth may be that the clamor for more opera is made by a very small number of people shouting in concert and consequently making a large noise. It is a rather sad commentary on their sincerity that there were just forty-six season subscribers to whom the Century Opera Company found itself indebted when it went out of business.

Unfortunately opera is inextricably woven into the fabric of social life. It has been so ever since it originated in the festive lyric dramas of the courts of Mantua and Florence. When it could no longer be kept from the public and issued into the open with the first performance at the Teatro San Cassiano in Venice, the aristocracy easily found a way to perpetuate a simulation of the exclusiveness which it so long possessed. The private box solved the problem, and the box is the financial backbone of opera to this day.

The educational schemes cannot touch this part of the operatic cosmos. If the box declares for opera of any kind rather than of no kind next winter, we shall assuredly have a season. So let us be of good courage. There are many Italian opera singers in this country. If De Luca, the greatest barytone now in Italy, cannot come, we have our AMATO and our SCOTTI, and no one will have to try to educate us to enjoy hearing them.

## The Pig Iron Poet.

For years nobody, not even the Hon. J. BYRON ELMORE, the Bard of Alamo and the glory of Indiana, has quite consoled the lovers of true American poetry for the loss of J. GONON COUGLER, South Carolina's sweetest minstrel. At last from Pennsylvania Allentown, a capital of pig iron, speeds the voice of gold and sugar. "The Pathos of Song and Other Poems" by GEORGE KELLER DE LONG, sings and sings before us. If we mourn COUGLER it is with only a softened regret. Here is the old, homely, human, Couglerian note:

"Our utmost skill we both did try  
To catch the fitting butterfly.  
Bald bumblebees that had no sting  
We held within our hand to sing."

"Grasshoppers we did make them chew  
And spiders make them spider too.  
We clung unto the grapevine swing,  
With childish glee did shout and sing."

"We waded in the shallow stream  
Whose murmur mingled with our scream,  
We watched the minnows darting fast,  
The tadpoles slowly paddling past."

We never ran across any stingsless bumblebees, whereas not a few of those stinging yellow breasted philosophers assailed our green unknowing youth; but no doubt they sang goes with Mr. De Long, whose fine poem quoted above has a Marlowian feel, something of the madrigals to the shallow rivers falls. In "The Slip Success" we find not only noble sentiments but a stately style:

"Awake! oh, soul awake!  
How long will you concede  
Through hibernating sleep?  
Arouse yourself and shake  
The shackles from your feet  
That you ignored do keep."

"A stately style acquire,  
The family raise,  
So shape your every years  
That friends will you admire  
And raise their voice in praise  
With their regards sincere."

His patriotism is fervent. Hear him hail his native land:

"Great is thy domain—  
Heeded by sovereigns afar.  
Sweet thy fond refrain  
Since thy Monarch dared to bar."

In the "Launching Lay" of the battleship Louisiana (1904) the metre has the soft surrus of the waves:

"Rod of our chastity  
Ply not in vain;  
Neath thy grave battery  
Peace ever reign."

Unlike too many of the choir, he is a Dry:

"What a contrast there is twixt a fountain of bile  
And a beer saloon of woe;  
While the one gives relief and the other gives grief  
To the ones who thither go."

Sound and kind in his ethics, sober in his pace, an excellent family Pegasus.

## A Welcome Rain Coat.

The adoption of white rubber coats to protect the police of the traffic force on rainy days is one of the most commendable improvements recently made by the Police Department. The purpose of the white rain coat is to enable people to see the policeman, who might otherwise be mistaken for a street cleaner or even a messenger boy. It is an excellent idea, for it is at all times desirable that people moving through the streets should be able to see the traffic police.

It is especially necessary that those who are about to cross streets at such danger spots as Broadway and Forty-fourth street, Broadway and Thirty-fourth street, Fifth avenue and Forty-second street, and the same

avenue at Thirty-fourth street, should know just where to find the traffic policeman who is directing the movement of vehicles at the point. If the unwary pedestrian does not keep his eyes on the officer and also on the motor cars, he may find himself run down by some law abiding chauffeur who is doing just what the officer has bid him do.

The practice of ignoring the pedestrian on the crossing continues. Protest has been made against the system of handling traffic which apparently includes a relegation of the walking citizen to the category of public nuisances; but no attention has been accorded to the complaint. Here and there individual policemen assume the responsibility of taking care of the people who are trying to cross the street and of waiting till they are out of the way before starting vehicles.

But the fact still remains that many policemen deliberately look over the heads of the pedestrians who are crossing and signal vehicles to move when many walkers are not five feet from the front of the cars and from ten to twenty feet away from the sidewalk. The attitude of these policemen shows plainly that they do not regard themselves as responsible for the protection of the walking public. Their business is to direct vehicles; foot passengers must look out for themselves. So let us all be thankful for the white rain coats. In stormy weather we shall be better able to guard ourselves against the dangers of the traffic system.

The Right Hon. ARTHUR J. BALFOUR would have to make a great sacrifice if he accepted an appointment as First Lord of the Admiralty: he would not be able to devote so much of his time to golf and tennis. If the chief consideration in selecting a man to succeed Mr. Balfour is that he shall have more respect for the professional knowledge of Lord FISHER, Mr. BALFOUR is certainly eligible.

The Bishop of London, who refuses to consider applications for ordination from men physically able to fight at the front, must be of the same martial stamp as Bishop LEONIDAS POLK, who put on the uniform of a Major-General at the request of JEFFERSON DAVIS to fight for the Southern Confederacy. However, it must be remembered that the good Bishop was a graduate of West Point.

Russia's order for 22,000 freight cars placed in the United States is more significant than the victory of the Teutonic allies on the San or the fact that they hold about 1,000,000 Russian prisoners.

If PROVOST SMITH's only reason for opposing coeducation at the University of Pennsylvania is that "some of the present women students seem more interested in the male students than in acquiring knowledge" he must have overlooked some cases of reciprocity among the young men.

## Diplomatic Syntax Again.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: In THE SUN of May 21 "J. E. S." discusses the use of plural verbs and pronouns in conjunction with the term "German Imperial Government" in President Wilson's recent note to Germany.

J. E. S. is correct in his analysis and finds it correct in differing with the correspondent of THE SUN who in your issue of May 19 found the use incorrect.

The headlines which we have given to the editorial in your issue of May 19, "The German Imperial Government," are not only correct but also a degree of refinement. I think that the true explanation is in the use of plural verbs and pronouns than that given by "J. E. S." The details of the preparation of the President's recent note have been widely discussed in the papers. They have told that the note represented a practically unaided effort; that it was submitted to the Cabinet only when it was substantially in its final form, and that such advice as he sought in its preparation was confined entirely to the question of seeing that it conformed in phraseology to diplomatic usage. Several New York papers mentioned Mr. Lansing as having had a hand in the part of the work, and the New York paper mentions Mr. Adee as having assisted in this respect.

One fairly well established form of diplomatic correspondence is the use of the plural verb and pronoun with the designation "His Majesty's Government." For instance, the statement given out by the British Foreign Office on the evening of May 20 used this form throughout, as in the following: "His Majesty's Government feel satisfied that undue interference cannot with reason be imputed to the German Government."

This practice of the British Foreign Office is perhaps not peculiar to diplomatic correspondence, for it is a common custom of English solicitors, and for all I know of other English professional men and business men, to use the plural verb and pronoun with such words as "company," "firm," "club," "association," and so on, and in fact, it is almost invariably used with the singular verb and pronoun.

May it not be then that the use of the plural verb and pronoun in Mr. Wilson's note is not only correct but also conforms to what was supposed to be the elegant requirement of the case without fully appreciating the fact that there is perhaps no particular diplomatic significance in the use of this form? The case pointed out by "J. E. S." in which in Mr. Wilson's note there was a departure from this form are probably most simply explained as errors on the part of whomever revised the note; or if not otherwise, then as the result of an insufficient familiarity with the form to make it carrying out in detail a matter of course requiring no special mental effort.

HENRY H. WARD.  
WASHINGTON, D. C., May 22.

## THE UNTERIFIED RHYME-STER.

When Ring Sing is made over new,  
Sports, comforts, bracing air,  
I know some things I think I do,  
In hopes of going there.

TO THE BOARD OF HEALTH.  
I have no auto, for I want  
My dollars are too few,  
But I run a coach in gasoline  
All up Fifth avenue.

Academic and Institutional.  
I'm neither an auto-mobilist  
Nor a don of the humbler grade,  
Who stands 'neath the glorious parade  
And reads the book of the parade.

I just look on and chortle  
To see how greatness is made.  
DUFFIELD GARDNER.

## SOAPS' DIETARY STANDING.

New Jersey matrimonial infelicities as revealed by recent court proceedings seem to have largely hinged on culinary controversies. The cases of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Russell Rogers and Mr. and Mrs. William Malt are in point.

Mrs. Rogers sets up as a defence to her husband's suit for divorce that she flatly refused to serve roast turkey on the very first New Year's Eve after their marriage. Mr. Rogers counters with the allegation that his wife deluged his midst with kidney soup and he got no less than three instances of kidney soup assaults on his insides within a single week. He does not allege any personal aversion to kidney stew as such. What he objects to apparently is being drenched, submerged, drowned in kidney soup. The case being still before the court, president of the New Jersey Soap Manufacturers' Association, the proprietors permit nothing further than this bare statement of facts alleged.

The tried soap litigation between Mr. and Mrs. Malt, having been temporarily at least put out of court by Recorder Medina, is more open to discussion. Mr. Malt appeared before the learned Recorder accompanied by several flapjacks and two pork chops. These, he averred, had been cooked for his consumption by Mrs. Malt and had been cooked by her in soap. Mr. Malt's wife, in answer to Mr. Malt's malediction of the dining table and chairs to the floor and committed other acts indicative of a frantic and tumultuous state of mind. Whether it will be urged in Mr. Malt's behalf that the use of soap in the kitchen is a dyspepsia causing within the purview of indulgence accorded to brainstomach sufferers is of course for learned counsel to determine. Mr. Malt himself makes no such plea. He takes his stand squarely on the flapjack-pork chop exhibit, Mr. Malt's complaint through once that the learned Recorder of Joseph Surface in the "School for Scandal" for Lady Teazle's presence behind the screen. He lied out of it the best he could, and he had no other recourse. Mr. Malt's wife, in answer to Mr. Malt's malediction of the dining table and chairs to the floor and committed other acts indicative of a frantic and tumultuous state of mind. Whether it will be urged in Mr. Malt's behalf that the use of soap in the kitchen is a dyspepsia causing within the purview of indulgence accorded to brainstomach sufferers is of course for learned counsel to determine. Mr. Malt himself makes no such plea. He takes his stand squarely on the flapjack-pork chop exhibit, Mr. Malt's complaint through once that the learned Recorder of Joseph Surface in the "School for Scandal" for Lady Teazle's presence behind the screen. He lied out of it the best he could, and he had no other recourse.

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